United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/726/Rev.1*
17 September 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ General Assembly ends resumed forty-fourth session; adopts final resolution on policies of apartheid of Government of South Africa.

+ Security Council unanimously condemns aggressive acts by Iraq against diplomatic premises and personnel in Kuwait.

+ Conference on Least Developed Countries concludes its two-week session in Paris by adopting new Programme of Action.

+ UNDP, UNEP and World Bank seek $1 billion from industrialized countries for environmental fund proposed for developing countries.

+ Report on status of contributions to United Nations regular budget and continuing operations is issued.

* * *

The General Assembly this afternoon ended its resumed forty-fourth session by adopting a resolution on policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa.

In the resolution, introduced by Nigeria, the Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report on the progress made in the implementation of the Assembly's Declaration on Apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa of last April.

(more)

---

*Revised to correct the penultimate paragraph in the press release, which inadvertently listed Brunei Darussalam as being in arrears in their contributions to the United Nations regular budget.

The Assembly called upon all Governments and intergovernmental organizations to adhere strictly to the Programme of Action contained in the Declaration by maintaining existing measures aimed at encouraging the South African regime to eradicate apartheid until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes, bearing in mind the objectives of the Declaration.

The Assembly further called upon the Government of South Africa to proceed without delay to establish a climate fully conducive to negotiations by taking all the steps stipulated in the Declaration,in particular to implement its commitment to repeal all legislation, such as the Internal Security Act, designed to circumscribe political activity.

In addition, the resolution called for an immediate end to violence and urged the South African authorities to take urgent action to end it, specifically by dismantling the apartheid structures as well as by ensuring effective and impartial action by the security forces. It called upon all parties concerned to contribute to the establishment of a climate free of violence.

Action on an agenda item concerning the question of Haiti was deferred until the forty-fifth session which will begin tomorrow.

In a statement closing the session, the President of the General Assembly, Joseph N. Garba, pointed out the "extraordinary change in the image and fortunes" of the United Nations during the past year.

He further stated that the United Nations was "as good or as bad as the States which compose it", adding that the Organization could never be anything but a "mirror of the world as it is".

The forty-fourth session of the Assembly had witnessed the United Nation's gradual assumption of a new confidence and status, as it regained its "long-vacant post of facilitator of world peace and security", Mr. Garba said.

He then mentioned the three special sessions on economic co-operation, drug trafficking and apartheid, respectively, as examples of how the Assembly had asserted itself on the "essential issues of our times" and had demonstrated "remarkable achievements" when political will was maintained.

* * *

The Security Council yesterday unanimously condemned aggressive acts perpetrated by Iraq against diplomatic premises and personnel in Kuwait, including the abduction of foreign nationals who were present there.

It demanded that Iraq protect the safety and well-being of diplomatic and consular personnel and premises in Kuwait and in Iraq, and take no action to hinder the performance of their functions, including access to their nationals and the protection of their person and interests.

(more)

The Council took that action by adopting resolution 667 (1990), in which it also decided to consult urgently to take further concrete measures, as soon as possible, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, in response to Iraq's continued violation of the Charter, of resolutions of the Council and of international law.

The Council also demanded that Iraq immediately and fully comply with its international obligations under relevant Council resolutions on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, the Vienna Conventions on diplomatic and consular relations and international law.

The Council met at the request of France, Italy, Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, Finland, Austria, Hungary, Spain, Netherlands, Greece, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Portugal, Australia and Luxembourg. Those countries had requested the Council President, Yuliy Vorontsov (Soviet Union), to convene an immediate meeting to consider the situation between Iran and Kuwait, in view of the grave violations of international law and of the Vienna Conventions which Iraq had committed by entering the premises of the embassies of France and other countries in Kuwait and taking away diplomats and foreign nationals who were on those premises.

In a statement before the vote, Pierre-Louis Blanc (France) called upon the Council to respond swiftly in condemning the action and in demanding the release of diplomatic personnel of all foreign nationals taken hostage. The embargo must be strictly respected, he said. Also, the Council should send a clear warning to Iraq, which was not complying with Security Council resolutions, that if it continued to do so, the international community would consider taking other measures.

Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom) said the breaching of the inviolability of the French Embassy and of its occupants was only the latest and the most serious example of Iraq's disregard for its international obligations. Iraq had been trying to force foreign diplomats out of Kuwait by cutting off their water, electricity and telephones and by surrounding some embassies with troops and tanks, he said.

Thomas Pickering (United States) said that the ransacking of the French diplomatic premises was not an isolated incident, as Canadian, Belgian and American diplomats were also attacked. He urged that the Council meet as soon as possible to act under Chapter VII of the Charter.

The President of the Council, Yuliy Vorontsov, speaking as the representative of the Soviet Union, said the situation between Iraq and Kuwait must be resolved by diplomatic means. The Soviet Union called for the complete withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Iraq should be warned that if it did not respect United Nations resolutions, the Council might have to adopt further measures.

* * *

(more)

READEX FICHE

The Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries concluded its two-week session last Friday by adopting a new Programme of Action designed to speed the advance of the poorest countries during the 1990s. Compared with the Special New Programme of Action adopted at the first such Conference in 1981, the new Plan places greater emphasis on respect for human rights, the need for democratization and privatization, the potential role of women in development and the new regard for population policy as a fundamental factor in promoting development.

Concrete provisions for follow-up to the new Plan offer means of forestalling and remedying possible unforeseen developments, such as those which had undermined the 1981 Action Programme. Under the Plan, the donorcountries were given four distinct strata of commitment to increasing their official aid to the least developed countries. According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Kenneth K.S. Dadzie, the establishment of such levels would enable all donor countries to "come on board", including those which had in the past objected to the establishment of targets based on percentages of donors' gross national product (GNP).

Another improvement on the earlier Programme, Mr. Dadzie told correspondents at a press conference on Friday, was the present Plan's greater recognition of the role played by non-governmental organizations in the development of the least developed countries and a more comprehensive strategy for dealing with those countries' external indebtedness. In 1981, the debt problem had been recognized, but the remedial action proposed had been insufficient and far from comprehensive. Under the present strategy, donor countries would be called upon to take substantial steps to help the least developed countries cope with their debt burden.

In a separate Final Declaration, the Conference participants pledged to implement the Action Programme for the benefit of the least developed countries.

In other action, the Conference called for the completion of a review of the criteria for designating certain developing countries as "least developed", and appealed for assistance from all quarters for the new nation of Namibia, which it recommended for inclusion on the list of least developed countries.

* * *

The heads of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank today called for a speedy agreement on a $1 billion Global Environmental Facility to advance their agencies' joint "efforts to work with a broad range of developing countries and to assist them in ensuring that their development programmes are undertaken in a manner which protects the global environment".

(more)